



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

AN EXPERIMENT IN THIRD-YEAR ENGLISH

H. V. CHURCH

J. Sterling Morton High School, Cicero, Illinois

In these days in every high school the English course occupies the focal position in the curriculum. One who experiments in English has set his foot upon sacred ground; or, better, he has ventured into that inter-trench zone where every position taken must be well defended. The great war today is waged over the question whether composition and literature shall go hand in hand or be divorced. One can hardly hope to bring peace by suggesting a combination of composition, literature, and history. Yet in our experiment we made bold to do this, and in our effort to correlate the courses in literature and history we fused third-year composition, American literature, and American history. American literature lends itself to this device because of the narrow range, the small amount, and the simple grade of most of the material. The movements in American history offer few difficulties because they are simple, short, and clear. A fine basis for both forms of composition is found because the material is entertaining, informing, and inspiring. To a citizen of this country the whole body of material is of high social value.

In the orthodox high school American history is an elective. Everyone believes that all high-school pupils should study American history, but the enrichment of the secondary-school curriculum and the demands of college entrance have made this course an elective that is elected by few. With third-year English required and American history and American literature as the meat and bone of the course, one has the satisfaction of knowing that the history of one's country is not neglected in high school. The Senior is now required to study English a fourth year, and, since our experiment with third-year English proved successful, a combination course of fourth-year composition, English literature, and English history

was the logical outcome. This latter course has now run two years and will not be abandoned.

Each of these two courses should be conducted by one teacher. The third-year course is almost sure to be a successful one for any live teacher of English who has carried a minor in American history. A teacher with the normal amount of resilience has a capital time in this course. There is a wealth of material in the history and in the literature, so that every report and almost every fluent recitation gives material that is new to every member of the class. Interest is keen and spontaneous. The experiment would be a failure if one teacher conducted the English and another the history. It is not a course to be divided between two teachers. The material, both history and literature, reacts and interplays too closely to warrant any separation.

The class meets five times a week, and the course is not looked upon as an easy one. With the excess of written work—more than other English courses because of the notebook—an unusually large amount of oral composition, and the heavy requirement of the collateral reading both in literature and in the secondary history books, the year's course demands hard work. The text is Muzzey, *An American History*. Cairns, *Early American Writers*; Bronson, *American Prose*; Page, *Chief American Poets*; Foerster, *Chief American Prose Writers*; Long, *American Literature*, are handbooks in which the pupils must read constantly. Enough copies of these books are at hand so that no one is handicapped for lack of material. Samples of outlines follow:

SLAVERY AND THE WEST

1836-50

A. THE GATHERING CLOUD

1. Slavery

- a) Introduction
- b) Growth in the eighteenth century
- c) Views of:
 - (1) Antislavery North
 - (2) Humanitarian in South
 - (3) Question of profits

2. Missouri Compromise
 - a) Slavery question, 1819
 - b) Louisiana Treaty
 - c) Power of Congress disputed
 - d) Compromise
 - (1) Elements
 - (2) Significance
 - (3) Slavery a moral issue
 - (4) Growing importance
 3. Abolitionists
 - a) Garrison
 - b) Turner's insurrection
 - c) Antislavery v. abolition
 - d) North driven toward abolition
- B. TEXAS**
1. Later expansion
 - a) Connection with slavery
 - b) Mexican province
 - (1) American influence
 - (2) Independence
 - (3) Attempts to purchase
 2. Oregon
 - a) Claims
 - (1) Grey
 - (2) Lewis and Clark
 - (3) Astor
 - b) "Fifty-four forty or fight"—boundary dispute
 3. Annexation renewed
 - a) Politics
 - (1) Tyler read out of party
 - (2) Webster retired
 - (3) Whitman
 - b) Growth of sentiment
 - c) Treaty rejected
 - d) Annexed by joint resolution
 - e) State organized
- C. MEXICAN WAR**
- a) Taylor in Rio Grande
 - b) Mexico City
 - c) Treaty
 - d) Questions remaining
 - (1) Wilmot proviso
 - (2) Squatter sovereignty
 - (3) Gold in California

1840-76

I. PERIOD OF AGITATION

A. Political

B. Mental and spiritual

1. Social reforms
2. Communistic societies—Brook Farm
3. Transcendentalism
4. Study of foreign languages and literature
5. Establishment of lyceums

C. National and sectional literature

I. POETS AND ESSAYISTS

	Page— <i>Chief American Poets</i>
	Good-Bye; The Rhodora; Each and All; Concord Hymn; The Humble-Bee; Woodnotes, I; The Snow-Storm; Fable; Forbearance; Threnody; Hamatreya; Give All to Love; Boston Hymn
Emerson.....	Foerster— <i>Essays</i>
	(1) Nature, sec. 1; (2) American Scholar, sec. 2; (3) Compensation, pp. 390-91
Thoreau.....	<i>Walden</i> , 1 chapter; <i>Economy</i> , last half; <i>Sounds</i>
Prose (non-fiction)	
Hawthorne.....	One novel
Prose (fiction)	One story from <i>Wonder Book</i>
	One legend
	<i>Reform</i> : Laus Deo; Ichabod; Massachusetts to Virginia; The Christian Slave; The Farewell of a Virginia Slave Mother
Whittier.....	<i>Legendary</i> : Skipper Ireson; Abraham Davenport; Barbara Frietchie; Cassandra Southwick
	<i>New England life</i> : Snow Bound; Poor Voter on Election Day; Huskers; Last Walk in Autumn
	Stanzas on Freedom; Columbus; The Present Crisis; Vision of Sir Launfal; The First Snowfall; Ode Recited at Harvard Commemoration; Ode Read at One Hundredth Anniversary of the Fight at Concord Bridge; <i>Bigelow Papers</i>
Lowell.....	

A week's work in this course is as follows: assignments in the history text; collateral reading in secondary books of history of a minimum of twenty-five pages; literature assignments which use the history as a background, equivalent to about fifty pages; and written work, which consists of writing up oral reports given in the daily class work. Each pupil reports orally to the class on subjects not treated in the textbook. Some forty or fifty of these reports are given each month by the class, and this makes a minimum demand on the pupil of two reports a month. Two reports a day on the average are given in class. The reports are always sure to be listened to because of the new material they contain; and, furthermore, interest is almost coerced because each pupil is required to take notes on these reports and expand the notes into paragraphs or outlines for the notebook. The teacher scans the notebook with the same care which he gives the other written work of the department. Besides the writing up of the notes from the pupil reports in class, three 700-1,000-word themes on collateral subjects are required each semester. In addition four home-reading books are required—two from the field of fiction, the third a biography, and a fourth that treats of the life of the people. These are the suggested readings for the first quarter of the year:

COLONIAL PERIOD

FICTION

Boy's Drake, Bacon
Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne
Merry Mount, Motley
Pocahontas and Powhatan, Eggleston
Green Mountain Boys, Thompson
Tales of New England, Jewett
Standish of Standish, Austin
Audrey, Johnston
To Have and to Hold, Johnston
Black Shilling, Barr
White Apron, Goodwin
Grandfather's Chair, Hawthorne
Alice of Old Vincennes, Thompson
Seats of the Mighty, Parker
Barnaby Lee, Bennett
Trail of the Sword, Parker
Story of Tonty, Catherwood
Lazarre, Catherwood

NON-FICTION

Elizabethan Adventures, Earle
Child Life in Colonial Days, Earle
Home Life in Colonial Days, Earle
Old Quebec, Parker
Story of the Trapper, Laut
Pioneers of France, La Salle and Northwest, Parkman
Story of the Indian, Grinnell

One who believes in the spiral construction of a curriculum can see his ideals consummated in this plan, for American history is often found in the early grades of the elementary school in story and hero form, and is met with again in the eighth grade in the narrative form, and appears for the third time in the eleventh grade in the industrial, social, and institutional form plus the attendant literary movements. Thus the field of American history is traversed three times. Now, certain advantages are obvious in the foregoing spiral treatment when it is compared with the procedure usually found in secondary schools. Many high schools have a course in American literature in one of the four years of the high-school curriculum. Along with this study of American literature goes a review of American history for the sake of background, and, no matter in what year the study is pursued, the narrative treatment of the history usually obtains. This is often, if not invariably, a wearisome repetition of the eighth-grade history work. It is perfectly patent that such a combination course as is shown above is far more interesting because the history is approached from a new angle. Again, in most high schools there is a United States history course pure and simple, but the handling of this course, which is usually given in the third or fourth year, is largely in narrative form, with rarely traces of other treatment. Such a course must endure the handicap of irksome repetition throughout its length; on the other hand, our experiment brings a newness that wins the interest and a wealth of inspiring material that enlists the enthusiasm of the students.

In the consideration of these courses from the standpoint of the student, the question at once arises: Which shall be credited, history or English? The courses are offered as English III and English IV and are so credited. Both courses are required seriatim of all who have survived English II, the second-year English course. With four years of English to one's credit one is well prepared to offer for college entrance three years of English, and to offer English history or American history as his chosen college may demand. He is prepared to jump either way and yet will have no difficulty with Freshman college English.

To the teacher who has handled history classes in the old-line way the combination course is a pleasanter task chiefly because of

the increased interest of the pupil. This increased interest is effected partly through the wider reading required of the pupil and partly through the clearer notions that come to him of the development of the literature out of the history. The reaction and correlation are very close. To prove that a clear conception of the development of the one out of the other is obtained by the pupil is difficult, but the fact always remains that the pupils look upon the course as more interesting and more entertaining than the other English courses they have taken.